Harry Potter and the Force of Magic Chapter 41 (Mirrors of the Mind)

Hello everyone. I'm happy to publish a New Chapter of Harry Potter and The Force of Magic, and Like the Chapter if you Enjoyed it.

I want to give a Special shout-out to David Deeg for becoming a God Patron. As one, they can choose one Story to be updated once every month. The Story he chose is Harry Potter and The Force of Magic.

Harry stood frozen in the swirling mist, his rational mind screaming warnings even as his heart yearned toward the impossible figure before him. Lily Potter stood before him, smiling at him.

"Don't be afraid, sweetheart," she said, her voice exactly as warm and loving as he'd always imagined it would be. "I've been waiting so long to hold you again."

Despite every instinct telling him to run, Harry found himself taking a step forward. The longing that had lived in his chest for fourteen years—the desperate need to hear his mother's voice, to feel her arms around him—was drowning him, thicker than any water.

"You've grown so tall," Lily continued, her smile becoming more natural, more genuine. "So handsome. You look just like your father, but you have my eyes." She reached out as if to touch his face. "Do you know how proud I am of you, Harry? How proud we both are?"

The words felt like joy pouring into his heart. How many nights had he lain awake wondering what his parents would think of him? Whether they'd be proud or disappointed? Whether they'd love the person he'd become?

"Mum?" The word slipped out before he could stop it, rough with emotion.

"Yes, my darling boy." Lily's expression grew infinitely tender. "I'm here. I'm finally here."

Harry's hand moved toward her almost without his conscious permission. Just one touch. Just to know what it felt like to have his mother's hand in his.

But as his fingers neared hers, something shifted. The mist around them began to thicken and darken. The forest disappeared, replaced by the familiar outline of a small cottage—Godric's Hollow on that terrible Halloween night.

"Come inside, Harry," Lily said sweetly, walking towards the door. "Come home."

The cottage door stood open, spilling warm yellow light onto the front garden. Harry could hear laughter from within—his father's laugh. For a moment, the scene was perfect, peaceful. The home he'd never known but had always dreamed of.

Then the laughter cut off abruptly, replaced by the sound of splintering wood and a high, cold voice that made Harry's blood freeze.

"Stand aside, you silly girl. Stand aside now."

"No, not Harry, not Harry, please not Harry!"

"Stand aside, you silly girl... stand aside now..."

"Not Harry, please no, take me, kill me instead—"

The green light flashed, and Lily crumpled to the ground just inside the doorway. But this time, Harry wasn't dreaming about it, he wasn't hearing it because of a dementor's presence near him—he was standing right there, close enough to see the life fade from those green eyes that matched his own.

"You could have saved her," said a voice behind him. Harry spun around to find himself face-to-face with Tom Riddle as he had been in the Chamber of Secrets, handsome and young.

"If you had been stronger," Tom continued conversationally, "if you had embraced what you truly are, she might still be alive. But you were weak. A mewling infant who could only cry while his parents died for his worthlessness."

The scene shifted around them like water. Now Harry stood in the nursery, looking down at his infant self in the cot. The baby's eyes were wide with terror, tiny hands reaching up toward something the adult Harry couldn't see.

"Such potential," Tom mused, appearing beside the cot. "Even then, I could sense it. The darkness in you. The hunger for power. You're more like me than you care to admit, Harry Potter."

"I'm nothing like you," Harry snarled.

"Aren't you?" Tom's smile was sharp as a blade. "Tell me, how did it feel when you killed those Death Eaters at the World Cup? When you felt their lives end by your hand?"

The scene shifted again. Harry found himself back in the chaos of the World Cup attack, watching himself cast "Flóga Aímatos" and incinerate a Death Eater. But this time, he could see his own face clearly—and the expression there was one of fierce satisfaction, almost hunger.

"You enjoyed it," Tom observed. "The power. The knowledge that you could end a life with a thought. How does that make you different from me?"

The cottage, the nursery, the World Cup—all of it dissolved into swirling darkness, and Harry found himself in a space that was neither here nor there. Shadows moved around him, taking shape.

The first shadow solidified into himself—but wrong somehow. This other Harry had eyes that glowed with golden light, but it was cold and hungry.

"The Holy Magic," mirror-Harry continued, his golden eyes brightening. "Such a lovely name for it, don't you think? Makes it sound so pure, so righteous. But power is power, Harry. And you've felt what it can do. How long before you realize that the only difference between us is that I'm honest about what I want?"

"The magic isn't evil," Harry protested.

"Isn't it?" Shadow-Harry laughed, and the sound was like breaking glass. "Tell that to Arthur Potter, who died trying to use Holy Magic to bring back the dead. Tell that to the unnamed witch with blood-red hair who lost herself so completely to the power that they erased her from history itself. You think you're different? You think you can control what drove them to madness?"

Images flashed around him, images that he should not know, he wasn't alive to see them—Arthur Potter's corpse found in the forest, his body hugging a corpse, the red-haired witch standing over the unconscious bodies of thousands of Londoners, her eyes blazing with golden fire as she laughed at the destruction she'd caused.

"You felt it, didn't you?" Shadow-Harry continued. "When you used the Sanguis Flamma on Pettigrew. When you wiped everyone's memories. The intoxication of absolute power. How easy it would be to do it again. How tempting."

A new fear took shape—the image of himself standing over Hermione, Ron, and Fleur, all of them unconscious at his feet while golden light flickered around his hands.

"No," Harry whispered, but the image shifted. Now he saw himself using Holy Magic not to protect, but to control. Making Hermione love him with a spell. Forcing Ron's loyalty with magic. Bending Fleur to his will because he could.

"You're already halfway there," a new voice said, and Harry turned to see another familiar figure approaching—Hermione, but with eyes full of contempt and disgust.

"Did you really think I couldn't see it?" Nightmare-Hermione asked. "The way you manipulate us? The way you collect us like trophies to boost your ego? Poor little orphan Harry, so desperate for love that he'll take it from anyone foolish enough to offer it."

"That's not true," Harry said desperately. "I care about you—all of you."

"Care?" Nightmare-Hermione laughed bitterly. "You mean the way you 'cared' when you let me think you were faithful while you were sleeping with Tonks? The way you 'cared' when you added Fleur to your collection? How many more girls are you planning to string along, Harry? How many more hearts are you going to break while you play at being the tragic hero?"

Ron appeared beside her, his face twisted with betrayal and pain. "My best mate," he said mockingly. "The great Harry Potter, who can't even be honest with the people who love him. You want to know what I really think? I think you're a selfish git who uses his fame and his sob story to get whatever he wants."

"Ron, please—"

"Please what?" Nightmare-Ron's voice was vicious. "Please pretend I don't see how you look at Hermione like she's your property? Please ignore how you flaunt your relationships in front of everyone while I'm supposed to be grateful for the scraps of attention you throw my way?"

More figures emerged from the darkness—Sirius, his face filled with disappointment that cut deeper than any wound.

"James and Lily would be ashamed," Nightmare-Sirius said quietly. "They died protecting an innocent child, and look what that child became. A manipulator. A killer. Someone who takes and takes and takes without ever giving anything real in return."

"That's not—I'm not—" Harry stumbled backward, but there was nowhere to go. The darkness pressed in from all sides, and the voices of everyone he loved echoed around him, listing his failures, his sins, his inadequacies.

"Unworthy," they chanted in unison. "Selfish. Corrupted. Monster."

The environment around Harry began to shift and twist. The open darkness compressed into a narrow corridor lined with mirrors, each one reflecting a different version of himself—all of them wrong, all of them showing the worst possible interpretation of who he was.

In one mirror, he saw himself as Voldemort had been—handsome, charismatic, and utterly without conscience. In another, he was his uncle Vernon, bloated with self-importance and cruelty. A third showed him as a broken shell, curled up in a corner while the people he claimed to love suffered because of his weakness.

"You can't escape what you are," Nightmare-Hermione whispered, appearing beside him in the corridor. But now her face was shifting, becoming someone else... it was Susan Bones, tears streaming down her face.

"I was so grateful to you," Nightmare-Susan sobbed. "I thought you were a hero. But you just saved me so you could have another conquest, didn't you? Another girl to add to your collection. How stupid was I to think the great Harry Potter might actually care about me as a person?"

"I never—I didn't—" Harry tried to protest, but his words felt hollow even to himself. Had he been using people? Had his desire for connection and belonging twisted into something darker?

The mirrors around him began to crack, spider-web fractures spreading across the glass as his reflection multiplied into hundreds of distorted versions. Some showed him with golden eyes blazing with power, others showed him broken and weeping, and still others showed him laughing as the world burned around him.

"Face the truth," said a voice that might have been his own. "You're not the hero of this story. You're not even the victim. You're the monster that everyone else needs protection from."

The corridor began to collapse inward, the walls pressing closer together as the ceiling lowered toward his head. The air grew thick and hard to breathe, tainted with the smell of smoke and blood and dark magic.

"They'll all leave you eventually," Nightmare-Sirius said, his voice echoing from the crumbling walls. "When they see what you really are. When they realize that every good thing in their lives turns to ash in your hands. Hermione, Ron, Fleur, Tonks—they'll all walk away, and you'll be alone. Just like you deserve to be."

"Alone," the other voices echoed. "Alone, alone, alone..."

The word became a chant, a drumbeat that matched the pounding of Harry's heart as panic seized him. The walls were only inches away now, close enough that he could feel the cold stone against his skin. The mirrors had become windows, and through them he could see everyone he cared about walking away from him, their faces filled with disgust and disappointment.

"This is what you are," the voices whispered. "This is what you've always been. A burden. A danger. A mistake that should never have survived that night in Godric's Hollow."

Harry's despair reached a crescendo, crushing him down into a ball of self-loathing and terror. The voices were right—he was corrupted, selfish, dangerous. Everyone would be better off if he just... disappeared.

But as that final, terrible thought crystallized in his mind, something deep within him stirred. A warmth pulsed.

Power serves a purpose, not the other way around.

Venefecia's voice, clear and strong, cut through the chaos of his thoughts. Not the poisonous whispers of the nightmare, but the remembered wisdom of someone who had faced this same darkness and emerged victorious.

You are not your fears, Harry Potter. You are not your worst moments or your deepest shames. You are the sum of your choices, and you have chosen, again and again, to protect those who cannot protect themselves.

The warmth in his chest grew stronger, pushing back against the suffocating weight of despair. Golden light began to seep through his skin, not the cold hunger of corruption but the warm glow of genuine purpose.

"No," Harry said quietly, his voice barely audible over the chanting of the nightmare-voices. "You're wrong."

The chanting faltered slightly.

"I'm not perfect," Harry continued, his voice growing stronger as the light within him blazed brighter. "I've made mistakes. I've hurt people. I've enjoyed power when I shouldn't have. But that doesn't make me a monster."

The walls had stopped closing in, though they remained oppressively close.

"I saved Susan because she needed saving," Harry said, golden light now pouring from his eyes and hands. "I love Hermione because she's brilliant and brave and kind, not because I want to own her. I value Ron's friendship because he's loyal and honest and real, not because I need someone to worship me."

The nightmare-figures were starting to look less solid, their edges wavering like smoke.

"And the Holy Magic..." Harry raised his hands, watching the golden light dance between his fingers. "It's not corruption. It's hope. It's the power to heal, to protect, to purify. It's what saved me from Voldemort, and it's what connects me to every Potter who came before me—not as a burden, but as a legacy."

The light was streaming from him now in waves, and wherever it touched, the nightmare began to dissolve. The crushing walls cracked and crumbled, the mirrors shattered into sparkling dust, and the voices of his tormentors became thin and distant.

"*Penumbra Lux,*" Harry whispered, but this time he cast the spell inward, letting the silvery fire burn through his own mind and soul, consuming every trace of the nightmare's poison.

The darkness didn't flee—it simply ceased to exist, devoured by a light that was older and stronger and infinitely more real than any artificial fear could ever be.

And suddenly, Harry understood. The creatures—whatever they were—fed on despair and self-doubt, growing stronger as their victims grew weaker. But Holy Magic was the antithesis of despair. It was hope made manifest, purpose given form, love transformed into power.

The nightmare couldn't touch him anymore because he knew, with absolute certainty, who he was. Not perfect, not without flaws, but fundamentally good. Someone who had been given great power and who chose, every day, to use it in service of something larger than himself.

The false Lily, the shadow-Harry, the nightmare-versions of his friends—all of them dissolved like smoke in sunlight as the golden radiance filled every corner of the collapsing illusion.

And then, abruptly, Harry was awake

Harry's eyes snapped open, his heart hammering against his ribs as the last wisps of golden light faded from his vision. For a disorienting moment, he couldn't understand where he was—the forest floor felt impossibly hard beneath his back, and the Invisibility Cloak was tangled around his legs like a shroud.

How long was I unconscious? The thought hit him as he struggled to sit up, his limbs feeling heavy and unresponsive. The forest around him was completely dark now, with only the faintest sliver of moon filtering through the canopy above. When they'd first encountered the mist, there had still been traces of twilight in the sky.

Hours. He'd been unconscious for hours.

Ron. Panic clawed at his chest as he imagined his best friend pacing frantically by Hagrid's hut, probably debating whether to alert Dumbledore or come looking for them himself. Ron would be beside himself with worry, and rightfully so—they'd agreed on a time limit, and Harry had blown past it spectacularly.

As he tried to untangle himself from the cloak, his hand brushed against something warm and solid beside him. Harry's blood turned to ice as he realized what—or rather, who—it was.

Fleur lay on her side next to him, still partially covered by the Invisibility Cloak. But unlike Harry, she wasn't waking up. Her entire body was trembling, fine shivers that reminded him uncomfortably of someone in the grip of a high fever.

Harry's stomach dropped. Whatever had attacked them was still holding her.

He had to get her out.

Fleur Delacour

Fleur found herself standing in the grand hall of Beauxbatons, but something was wrong. The familiar blue and silver banners had been replaced with mirrors—hundreds of them, each reflecting a different version of herself. In one, she saw herself as others seemed to see her: in one of them, she saw herself, she was the most beautiful woman in the world, everyone was applauding at her, but as she looked closer, Fleur felt her throat tighten, she saw a crack on her cheek, widening, and her skin cracked and crumbled from her face, revealing an emptiness, just void, darkness, nothing else.

In another mirror, Fleur watched herself receiving the highest marks in Advanced Transfiguration, Professor Dubois placing a golden medal around her neck as the crowd cheered. But as the applause grew louder, she noticed the professor's eyes. They were glassy, unfocused, pupils dilated. One by one, the other professors turned toward her, and she saw the same glazed expression on every face. Their hands moved in jerky, puppet-like motions as they clapped, and when they opened their mouths to cheer, only her own voice emerged. The medal around her neck grew heavier and heavier until she realized it wasn't gold at all, but a chain, binding her to achievements that were never truly hers.

A third mirror showed her with Harry, dancing at what looked like a ball. He gazed at her with adoration, whispering sweet words as they moved across the floor. But as she watched, his eyes began to change. Not the warm green she knew, but reflective like glass, showing only her own face staring back. His hands on her waist felt wrong, mechanical, and when she looked

down, she saw strings attached to his wrists and ankles, thin silver threads that led back to her own fingers. She tried to let go, to cut the strings, but they were woven into her very flesh. Harry's lips moved, saying "I love you," over and over.

In another mirror with a dark cover, she sat at the dinner table with her family, Gabrielle chattering excitedly about her own acceptance letter to Beauxbatons. But as Fleur watched, her family's faces began to fade, becoming translucent, see-through. Her father's proud smile became a grimace of effort, as if he were lifting something impossibly heavy. Her mother's loving gaze flickered like a dying flame. Gabrielle's excited words slowed and distorted, becoming a hollow echo. One by one, they stood and walked away, their forms becoming more and more transparent until she could see through them completely. The last thing to disappear was her mother's voice, strained and tired: "We tried so hard to love the real you, *ma chérie*, but we could never find her underneath."

The final mirror showed her alone in her dormitory, looking at her reflection in her vanity mirror. But this reflection wouldn't copy her movements—instead, it smiled when Fleur frowned, laughed when Fleur cried. The reflection began to peel away layers of itself like old paint: first the silver hair, revealing mousy brown underneath; then the blue eyes, showing plain gray; then the graceful features, leaving behind something utterly ordinary. But even when everything beautiful was stripped away, the reflection kept peeling, kept removing pieces of itself until there was nothing left but the mirror's silver backing. Fleur reached out to touch the glass, desperate to find something—anything—that was truly her, but her hand passed right through. She had never existed at all.

"Mademoiselle Delacour," came a voice she recognized—Professor Dubois, her Advanced Transfiguration instructor. But when she turned, his face was cold with disappointment. "Another perfect score. Tell me, how much of this was your own work, and how much was... influence?"

"I did not use—" she began, but her voice came out wrong, like a bird's cry rather than human speech.

"Of course not," Professor Dubois said with a bitter laugh. "We all knew, Fleur. Every time you raised your hand, every time you got top marks, we saw the shimmer in your hair. You're not brilliant—you're just a very convincing liar."

The scene shifted, and suddenly she was in the Dueling Club at Beauxbatons, facing her longtime rival, Céleste Moreau. But instead of the familiar competitive fire in Céleste's eyes, there was only disgust.

"You think you're so talented," Céleste sneered. "But everyone knows why you really win. The judges are all men, aren't they? And men are so easily... distracted."

"Non," Fleur whispered, but her voice was growing weaker, less human. "I train every day... I work 'arder than anyone..."

"Do you?" came her mother's voice, and Fleur spun around to see Apolline approaching. But instead of a loving gaze, all she saw was disappointment. "Or do you simply coast on what your grandmother's blood gives you? I see the way people look at you, Fleur. I see what they expect. Perhaps... perhaps they're not wrong."

The hall began to crumble around her, and Fleur felt herself changing, becoming more bird than human, her voice turning to meaningless screeches as everyone she'd ever wanted to impress walked away, shaking their heads in disappointment.

Even Harry was there now, standing with Hermione and Ron, looking at her with the same expression she'd seen on so many faces before—initial attraction followed by dismissal once they realized she was just another pretty Veela.

"I thought she might be different," Harry was saying to his friends. "But she's probably just using her allure like all the others. Makes you wonder if anything about her is real."

"Non!" Fleur cried out, but the sound that emerged was the screech of a bird. "I am real! I am more than zis!"

But they were already walking away, and the mirrors around her showed nothing but empty reflections, as if she herself had ceased to exist entirely.

Fleur's eyes snapped open, but the terror of the nightmare clung to her like a suffocating shroud. Everything was wrong, the environment, the light, the sensations. Her Veela heritage responded to her panic instantly, her hair bursting into ethereal flames and her fingers elongating into talons as her body prepared for a fight.

Something was moving near her, a shape in the darkness. Without thought, she launched herself at it, her transformed hands reaching to defend herself against whatever had been tormenting her in the nightmare.

"Fleur, it's me. It's Harry. You're safe. The nightmare is over."

The voice cut through her panic like a lifeline. Harry. Not the dismissive nightmare-version, but the real Harry, calm and steady and completely unafraid despite the fact that her talons were inches from his throat.

Recognition flooded through her, followed immediately by horror at what she'd almost done. Her Veela features began to recede as she collapsed back onto what she now realized was the forest floor, her hair returning to its normal silver-blonde.

"*Mon Dieu*," she breathed, her hands flying to her mouth. "Harry, I... I could 'ave killed you..."

"But you didn't," Harry said firmly. "You recognized me in time."

Fleur's cheeks burned with embarrassment. She'd completely lost control, allowed her Veela nature to take over in a way she hadn't done since she was a child. Worse, Harry had seen her at her most vulnerable, caught in whatever nightmare the creatures had woven around her.

A terrible thought occurred to her, and her stomach dropped. During nightmares, people sometimes talked in their sleep.

"Did I..." she began hesitantly, unable to meet his eyes. "Did I say anything? While I was... sleeping?"

"No," he said simply. "I just woke up a few minutes ago myself and saw you shaking. I thought you might be having a nightmare, so I tried to wake you up."

The relief that flooded through Fleur was so profound that it left her feeling dizzy. Whatever she might have experienced in the nightmare. They remained private. Harry hadn't heard her humiliate herself in her sleep.

"*Merci*," she whispered, some of the tension leaving her shoulders. "I... these creatures, whatever zey were, zey make you see things. Terrible things."

"I know," Harry said quietly. "I had my own nightmare to deal with."

A sound in the distance—branches breaking—made them both freeze. Whatever had attacked them might still be lurking in the forest, and neither of them was in any condition to face another psychological assault.

"We need to go," Harry said urgently, scrambling to his feet and offering her a hand up.

Fleur nodded, grateful for his steady presence as she pulled herself upright. Her legs were still shaky from the aftermath of the nightmare, but the immediate danger seemed to have focused her mind.

Harry retrieved the Invisibility Cloak and threw it over both of them. The space underneath was cramped, forcing them to stay close together as they began making their way back through the dark forest. Every sound made Fleur's heart race—she kept expecting to hear that terrible whisper again, to feel the nightmare creatures reaching for her mind.

But Harry's presence beside her was reassuring. He moved with confidence, guiding them both safely through the dangers of the Forbidden Forest. When a branch creaked ominously overhead, his hand briefly touched her arm in a gesture of comfort. When they had to duck under a low-hanging obstruction, he made sure she was steady before continuing forward.

By the time they reached the forest perimeter, Fleur's nerves were stretched taut as bowstrings. The Auror patrol had changed since their entry, requiring them to wait for a gap in the coverage before they could slip through undetected.

"Almost there," Harry murmured as they emerged onto the grounds proper.

They found Ron pacing frantically in front of Hagrid's hut, his wand clutched in his hand and his hair standing on end with worry.

"Oh, thank Merlin," Ron breathed as they appeared, pulling off the Invisibility Cloak. "I was about five minutes away from marching into that forest myself, and bugger the consequences. What the hell happened? You've been gone for hours!"

"We'll explain everything," Harry continued, "but not here."

Ron took one look at their faces and nodded immediately. "Right. Back to the castle then. And Harry?" He paused. "I'm glad you're both alright."

As they made their way back toward Hogwarts, Fleur found herself walking beside Harry in comfortable silence. Whatever had happened in the forest, they'd survived it together. And more importantly, Harry had chosen not to pry into her private fears, just as she had no intention of asking about his.

It felt like the foundation of something real—a trust built not on shared secrets, but on shared respect for each other's right to privacy. For someone who had spent her entire life having her thoughts and feelings dismissed or misinterpreted, that respect was more valuable than Harry might ever realize.